

DISPATCH		CLASSIFICATION	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NO.
TO	Chief [ ]	[REDACTED]	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NO. OIRW-16442
INFO	ATTN: [ ]		HEADQUARTERS FILE NO. 134 EW L-1524
FROM	Chief/MR		DATE 4 MAR 1960
SUBJECT	See DESDEMONA Termination		RE: "43-3" - (CHECK "X" ONE)
ACTION REQUIRED			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MARKED FOR INDEXING <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO INDEXING REQUIRED
REFERENCES	A. OIRW 20826 17 July, 1959 B. OIRW 15851 30 Sept, 1959 C. [ ] 0897	01 RA 71 35071	INDEXING CAN BE JUDGED BY QUALIFIED HQ. DESK ONLY
<b>DESENSITIZED</b> BY DOI 70-17			
<p>1. The matter of the final disposition of the DESDEMONA case has come to our attention once again, prompted by the receipt of a letter written by DESDEMONA to [ ] and forwarded to [ ] through DESDEMONA's nieces and former travelling companion (Idem). As you are aware, the possibility of this happening was brought to our attention per Ref C on 16 December 1959. DESDEMONA's letter, (a copy of which is being forwarded to you under separate cover) was dated 13 December, just one day after he had signed a quit claim and secrecy agreement, and understandably reflects DESDEMONA's emotional reaction to his termination.</p> <p>2. On 24 February 1960, [ ] had an interview with DESDEMONA's nieces and following are pertinent extracts from the file memorandum of that interview:</p> <p>a. (Idem) intended to return to New York where her sister is employed at Harper's Publishers, and then on or about 27 February, to proceed to Rome by air. She will return definitely to PEPRIME and begin work on her writing. She expects to return to PEPRIME in the fall after a 3-month motor trip through Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the USSR. She plans to do the trip with a friend (female) who is on the language teaching staff of Columbia, via RAGUSA. (Idem) plans to use her own vehicle, a Mercedes, for the trip. She plans to devote a good part of the trip to photography.</p> <p>b. Her intention to leave Italy permanently has raised the question of what will happen to DESDEMONA after she is gone. She will give up the Via Feltrina apartment, and she intends to help him find a smaller place. The letters she has had from him indicate that he is slowly regaining his health and apparently his morale is better. At the present time she stated, he has the poet, Ezra Pound, as a house guest with him in the Rome apartment. (Idem) explained that she was a friend of Pound's daughter, Mary, and his son-in-law, an Egyptologist, who originates from the Tyrol. Pound since his arrival in Italy has spent some time in the Tyrol at his son-in-law's "castle" and at Rapallo. He had wanted to go to Rome, and apparently it was his daughter's idea that DESDEMONA look after him in the capital.</p> <p>c. (Idem) apparently feels a very strong tie to DESDEMONA because she indicated she thought after her departure she might arrange for some small subsidy for him through his daughter, Vittoria, who has a position on the office staff of a ceramics firm in Milan.</p> <p>d. In response to a query, (Idem) discussed in detail the events in Libya leading up to the auto accident and DESDEMONA's subsequent return to Rome. She appeared to be particularly interested in establishing whether there would be any possibility for DESDEMONA to continue his collaboration. She described in summary terms what she knew of the talks that had taken place in Rome between [ ] and DESDEMONA. Apparently she was specifically concerned with determining whether DESDEMONA's termination in Rome was a unilateral and unappealable act. [ ] explained that he had not followed the developments of DESDEMONA's work in recent years and did not know nor could he judge the details of what had occurred, but that</p>			
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those with whom he had discussed DESDEMONA's predicament here felt a responsibility to achieve a result which DESDEMONA would regard as more or less satisfactory. It was impossible, however, for someone to sit in Headquarters and insist that a relationship based on reciprocal confidence and esteem be maintained by others unless those actually concerned shared these feelings. For a number of reasons, most importantly DESDEMONA's age and physical condition, [ ] said apparently the attitude in Rome regarding him had changed; therefore, it was difficult to foresee a substantial modification in the future relationship. This did not mean that DESDEMONA was not esteemed or that he would be forgotten. In general terms [ ] at this point indicated that he had a letter on the way to DESDEMONA via [ ] stating these things and suggesting that another attempt be undertaken to arrive at a result which would be satisfactory to him.

3. Enclosed herewith is that letter from [ ] for passage to DESDEMONA. Briefly it contains an acknowledgement of the letter DESDEMONA sent to [ ] through his niece and the concern [ ] has that DESDEMONA's settlement be a satisfactory one. It states that we do have an obligation to arrange things to DESDEMONA's satisfaction, and that if DESDEMONA's communication was understood correctly, it was the method rather than the fact of the termination that has caused the dissatisfaction. The letter goes on to state that the matter should be re-opened for further consideration and asks DESDEMONA to let us know what he thinks a just compensation might be, within reason of course, and to submit such specific accountings DESDEMONA feels are reimbursable and which were not submitted at the time of the unsatisfactory settlement. The letter closes with a recommendation that DESDEMONA contact [ ] directly in Rome.

4. Since we are still in agreement with [ ] that the decision to terminate DESDEMONA is a valid decision, we wish only to convey our suggestions that the DESDEMONA termination as an operational problem apparently has not been final. Consistent with the wishes of [ ] and [ ], the approach as well as the financial aspects of this termination should therefore be altered in a manner more acceptable to DESDEMONA. [ ] has all the correspondence and accountings on this case, and although Headquarters is available for any further consultation that may be necessary, we will agree to any settlement you deem just and reasonable, and which of course is acceptable to [ ]. You are authorized to change any further financial obligation to [ ] OOA. Whether or not the settlement is legal or suitable for defense in court is really not applicable, because we cannot in our clandestine type of activity afford to build up resentments, justified or unjustified, nor, on the other hand, can we place ourselves in a position of being perpetually blackmailed. There is no criticism of [ ] involved here, because the [ ] followed to the letter our previous suggestions. The problem is rather one of creating a favorable settlement, favorable to us as well, which is really final. The problem requires high operational finesse and we are not where it has to be done.

5. The matter of (Iden's) trip to the Soviet Union is under consideration here. [ ]'s initial impression is that she would favorably respond to a request for cooperation, and the matter of her recontact in Rome prior to her return to PEPPE was left open.

2 March 1960

ATTACHMENTS: Under separate cover

1. Identity
2. DESDEMONA's letter to [ ]
3. [ ] letter to DESDEMONA in dupl  
(1-file & 1-DESDEMONA)

By: [ ]  
WE/b/FI

Distribution:

- 2- [ ] (w/atts as stated)
- 2- Headquarters files (4-6-57)
- 1-WE/4/CD

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